Aurangabad and Calcutta which have been practically idle since inception due to lack of orders from the Department of Telecommunications;

(b) if so, the number of persons likely to be rendered unemployed as a result of the proposed closure of these factories; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for their rehabilitation/welfare?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Promotion of Cultural Tourism

1007. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI :
SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to draw a plan for the improvement of cultural ambience around the tourist spots in the country;

(b) if so, whether the State Governments are being consulted in this regard;

(c) the tourist spots identified by the State Government of Orissa;

(d) whether the Union Government have asked the India Tourism Development Corporation to prepare plan and programme for the purpose;

(e) if so, the scheme prepared by the India Tourism Development Corporation in the matter; and

(f) the details of the places selected by ITDC as the venue of the cultural festival scheduled for the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) and (b). The Department of Tourism has a new scheme for Refurkishment of monuments under which financial assistance is provided to State Governments to improve the surroundings of the monuments/heritage sites. The assistance is provided for the projects identified in consultation with State Governments.

(c) The following projects have been identified for Central financial assistance :

1. Refurbishment of monuments heritage sites Ratnagiri.
2. Refurbishment of monuments heritage sites at Lalitgiri.
3. Refurbishment of monuments heritage sites at Udaigiri.

(d) No Sir.

(e) and (f). Does not arise.

[Translation]

Distribution of Postal Articles in Rural Areas

1008. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the categories of employees engaged for the delivery of postal articles in rural areas along with the details of the facilities/pay scale given to them;

(b) whether these employees are not satisfied with their duties;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there are any complaints regarding postal delivery in rural areas;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (f). As on 31.03.1996, 79958 Extra Departmental Delivery Agents are entrusted with the job of postal deliver work in rural areas of the country. The Extra Departmental Delivery Agents are entitled to consolidated monthly allowances ranging between Rs. 240/- and Rs. 420/- depending on their workload. In addition, they are also paid the following:

(i) Dearness Allowance @ 159% of basic allowance;

(ii) Interim Relief of Rs. 50 w.e.f. 16.9.93, 10% each subject to Minimum of Rs. 50/- w.e.f. 1.4.95 and 1.4.96 respectively.

(iii) Fixed Stationery Charges @ Rs. 2/- per month.

(iv) Cycle Maintenance Allowance where applicable @ Rs. 30/- per month;

(v) Ex-gratia bonus paid once a year on the basis of their actual emoluments for the same number of days as paid to departmental employees.

(vi) Uttarakhand Division Allowance.

The Extra Departmental Agents of Uttarkhand Division are being paid on extra allowance of Rs. 40/- per annum in the month of September every year provided they have worked continuously as Extra Departmental Agent since March of that year;

(vii) Group Insurance Scheme.

The Extra Departmental Agents are also covered by a Group Insurance Scheme with effect from 1.4.1992. The scheme is optional for the Extra Departmental Agents already in employment before 1.4.1994 and is compulsory for the Extra Departmental Agents appointed on or after 1.4.1992. The scheme

gives a risk cover for Rs. 10,000/- on payment of Rs. 10/- per month. Out of this, Rs. 3.50 goes for insurance cover and Rs. 6.50 is the savings component. If an Extra Departmental Agent retires or leaves his job, he is paid the accumulated savings component with interest. In case of death, the nominee is paid Rs. 10,000/- plus accumulated savings component.

(viii) Ex-gratia Gratuity Rs. 6,000/-. The minimum mandatory service required for payment of Ex-gratia Gratuity is ten years.

There is no resentment among the ED Agents engaged in delivery of Dak in rural areas in regard to the delivery work.

There are instances of people of rural areas complaining against the employees in regard to delivery of Dak. These complaints relate to delay in delivery of mail and payment of money-orders in rural areas. This delay occurs due to various reasons such as cancellation/late running of mail carrying buses, trains and planes, natural calamities like floods, landslides, etc.

Efforts made by the Government to resolve the problems relating to delivery of dak in rural areas include holding regular meetings with the State Transport Authorities, Railways, Indian Airlines and other appropriate authorities at the State and National level. The transmission and delivery of mails and money-order in rural areas is also continuously monitored at various levels and prompt remedial action is taken wherever failures are noticed.

[English]

Expansion of Telephone Exchanges in Begusarai

1009. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal for the expansion of telephone exchanges in Begusarai district of Bihar is lying pending with the Union Government:

(b) if so, the details thereof:

(c) the time by which the expansion work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). Expansion of Telephone exchanges in Begusarai District has been planned. The details of telephone exchanges likely to be commissioned is given in the Statement enclosed.

(c) The work has already started and is likely to be completed by March, 1997 subject to availability of materials.

STATEMENT

Details of telephone exchanges planned for expansion during 1996-97 in Begusarai District (Bihar).

Name of Exchange	Type of Exchange
Babhangama	CDOT 256 P RAX
Bachhwara	CDOT 256 P RAX
Bakhri Bazar	CDOT 256 P RAX
Barauni	CDOT 256 P RAX and NEAK expansion.
Bhagwanpur	CDOT 256 P RAX
Bihat	CDOT line Module
Majhaul	CDOT 256 P RAX
Mansurchak	CDOT 256 P RAX
Rani	CDOT 256 P RAX
Begusarai	CDOT MBM 2000 lines
Bisanpur	CDOT 256 P RAX
Lakhminia	CDOT 256 P RAX
Matihani	CDOT 256 P RAX
Rajaura	CDOT 256 P RAX
Ramdiri	CDOT 256 P RAX
Sahebpur Kamal	CDOT 256 P RAX

[Translation]

Raids Conducted

1010. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of raids conducted by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Vigilance Department of the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited to unearth the corruption and irregularities prevailing therein and number of persons arrested in this respect alongwith their names: and

(b) the charges proved on the number of persons out of them so far and the nature of punishment awarded to them?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). Information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

[English]

Setting up Nagpur as Distribution Centre of SAIL

1011. SHRI ANANT GUDHE : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Vidarbha Steel Rollers Association has submitted any memorandum for development of Nagpur as conversion and distribution centre of SAIL in view of its central location and allotment of 50% of the defective